U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Atmospheric Programs, Global Programs Division
State and Local Capacity Building Branch
Solicitation Notice

April 17, 2003

"Climate-friendly decisions: transportation, smart growth and infrastructure"

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

ACTION: Notice of Solicitation.

I. SUMMARY

This Notice of Solicitation announces the availability of funding and solicits proposals from nonprofit organizations to develop a *climate-friendly decisions guidebook* for state and local officials. The purpose of the guidebook is to identify and describe opportunities to lower greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality through economically sound transportation, smart growth and infrastructure decisions. The funding will be allocated by EPA's Office of Atmospheric Programs (OAP) through the competitive process described in this notice.

II. OVERVIEW

In February of 2002, President Bush announced a comprehensive climate change strategy for the United States and set a voluntary goal of reducing greenhouse gas intensity by 18% over the next decade. States and localities are important contributors to this goal, given their historic experience developing greenhouse gas emissions reduction programs and their ability to test policy innovations that can further this goal.

This notice solicits proposals for the development of a "climate-friendly decisions" guidebook that helps state and local officials choose and implement policies, investments and programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The guidebook should focus on opportunities to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions in conjunction with other goals, such as improving air quality and public health, reducing energy consumption and costs, and creating opportunities for economic development. The goals of the guidebook include:

1. Identifying and describing specific transportation, smart growth, and infrastructure policies and strategies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions while simultaneously achieving other state and local goals. Where feasible, quantifying the costs of proposed measures in terms of $ per million metric tons carbon equivalent (MMTCE) reduced, and estimating the amount of greenhouse gas and criteria pollutants avoided.
2. Explicitly describing steps that state and local officials can take to implement these climate-friendly decisions with multiple benefits, and provide information on relevant decision support tools.

3. Providing relevant examples of successful state and local actions that incorporate climate-change into decision-making processes. Examples should quantify greenhouse gas and air pollutant savings from these actions.
4. Identifying, evaluating and recommending methodologies and tools to quantify the greenhouse gas and criteria pollutant savings from each decision.

EPA has identified the following priority topics for consideration in the guidebook:

1. Transportation: planning, financing, and market-based voluntary programs

Generally, successful transportation emission reduction programs are multi-faceted, combining a suite of complementary policies and measures, rather than single-purpose interventions and engaging a range of stakeholders and partners. Topics to be covered in the guide include:

- *Market-based voluntary programs* – Developing and applying innovative financing mechanisms and incentives to reduce VMT:
  a) Commuter choice, parking cash out, ride share incentive programs
  b) Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) allocations and flex-funding for transit
  c) Congestion pricing
  d) Pay-as-you drive insurance
  e) Other innovative approaches

- *Planning* – ways of integrating transportation and land use planning functions
  a) Increase transportation choices and encourage use of more efficient transportation modes (e.g., transit, bicycling, walking)
  b) Designing transportation infrastructure to support alternative travel modes

- *Financing* – Incorporating greenhouse gas reduction into criteria for near and long-term transportation investment decisions and plans
  a) Incorporating energy-efficient transportation alternatives into state, regional, and/or local land use plans
  b) Redirecting transportation funding toward transportation alternatives that reduce greenhouse gases.

2. Smart Growth: opportunities to lower greenhouse gases

There are substantial opportunities to lower energy consumption through improved land use planning, community design and building practices. These activities are commonly referred to as "smart growth." Smart growth development practices support national environmental goals by protecting sensitive habitats and watersheds, minimizing water quality impacts from development, reducing air emissions by providing alternative transportation choices and reducing heat island effects, and encouraging cleanup and sustainable redevelopment of brownfields. Smart Growth practices can also help communities further their economic development goals, revitalize neighborhoods, and reduce capital and maintenance expenditures for public infrastructure.

The guide will help states and localities lower their greenhouse gas emissions through "smart growth" decisions. Topics to be covered in the guidebook include:

- Community design and development practices that foster energy efficient buildings and transportation systems:
  a) Integrating community design and transportation infrastructure investments (i.e., transit-oriented development, making jobs and services accessible by alternative transportation methods)
  b) Identifying, evaluating and quantifying "smart growth" development approaches and design practices that reduce greenhouse gases.

- Energy efficient/green building practices and heat island reduction strategies.
  a) Green building designs and standards
  b) Heat island reduction techniques and policies (e.g., cool roofs and paving, reflective surfaces)

- Quantifying the "co-benefits" of smart growth practices
  a) Improvements to air quality
  b) Economic benefits of smart growth development practices
  c) Protecting and enhancing "green infrastructure" networks of habitat, open space, and related ecosystem services that could help lower greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon.

3. Public works and infrastructure

Publicly operated facilities consume significant amounts of energy. Moreover, infrastructure decisions and investments made today will affect energy demand for many decades. By incorporating greenhouse gas objectives into infrastructure decisions, state and local officials can reduce their emissions and energy costs. In many cases, these reductions have no or marginal incremental costs. Topics to be covered in the guidebook include:

- Energy efficiency: developing innovative strategies for lowering energy consumption in public facilities, including: street lighting and traffic control, wastewater and water treatment facilities, schools and municipal buildings.

- Freight and fleet infrastructure: Identifying targeted infrastructure investments and policies at the state and local levels that will increase the efficiency of freight transport systems and publicly and privately operated vehicle fleets. Describe opportunities for state and local efforts to build upon and complement federal initiatives addressing energy consumption from freight shipping and fleets.

- Clean energy – supporting development of renewables/onsite clean distributed generation, alternative fuels (i.e., natural gas refueling stations/fleets, ethanol & biodiesel, stationary fuel cells or combined heat and power/distributed generation applications at methane generation sources (e.g., wastewater treatment facilities, landfills) and redevelopment sites.

III. FUNDING INFORMATION

Amount of award: EPA expects to have approximately $50,000 available for proposals under this Notice. This is subject to availability of funding within the agency's final FY 2003 budget. Applicants should provide detailed descriptions of the activities proposed for the first-year under this competition, as well as a description of what follow-up activities would be conducted in subsequent years if additional funding were available. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards. Formal disputes challenging the Agency award decision, will be resolved using the Dispute Procedures at 40 CFR Part 30.63 and Part 31.70, Subpart F.

The award will be in the form of a cooperative agreement under CFDA # 66.034. Cooperative agreements entail substantial federal involvement in the project. Such involvement may include EPA review and approval of project scope and phases; EPA participation in and collaboration on, various phases of the work; EPA review of all draft and final products; regular e-mail, phone, and conference calls; and/or EPA involvement in selection of key recipient personnel.

Matching/Cost Share Requirements: There are no cost share requirements for these projects.

Project Period: The estimated project period for awards resulting from this solicitation is September 1, 2003 through September 30, 2004.
Statutory Authority, Applicable Regulations, and Funding Level: Funding for cooperative agreements awarded through this solicitation comes under the authority of Section 103(b)(3) of the Clean Air Act.

IV. ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Eligible entities will only include national, non-profit organizations actively involved with state and local climate change, transportation and/or air quality issues. By "national", EPA seeks organizations that have an extensive network of contacts with constituents located in multiple regions throughout the U.S. "Non-profit organization" is defined by OMB in Circular A-122.

V. DATES AND DEADLINES

The deadline for submitting Final Proposals is **June 17, 2003** (that is, they must be postmarked by that date). The Office of Atmospheric Programs expects to complete the Evaluation and Selection process and make recommendations to the grants office by July 1, 2003**.** All applicants will be notified promptly, after final selections, regarding their application's status.

VI. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

All questions or comments regarding this notice of solicitation must be communicated in writing via e-mail or regular mail. Responses to questions will be made available to all applicants.

VII. PROPOSALS

The proposal must be submitted with completed federal grant application forms and be a maximum of ten (10) pages. The complete federal grant application package can be downloaded from http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/index.htm. The proposal should conform to the following outline:

1. Title.
2. Applying organization and contact name, phone number, fax and e-mail address
3. Summary of funds requested from EPA.
4. Project period: beginning and ending dates (for planning purposes, applicants should assume funds will be available in July or August 2003). Projects must be completed within two years of award date.
5. Project purpose, goals, and objectives.
6. Workplan: narrative workplan should not exceed 5 pages and should include:

    a) Project summary. Describe the project activities, major outcomes, and time frame for the agreement activities from initiation to completion.
    b) Scope of the Analysis. Briefly describe the topics that will be addressed, geographic scope, and number of policy options that will be analyzed for each topic area.
    c) Technical approach. Describe the technical approach including analytical methods for estimating greenhouse gas and criteria air pollutants reduced by policies or specific projects, policy analysis methods, and staffing plan.
    d) Description of the project's relationship to prior work or other ongoing activities.
    e) Communications and outreach strategy. Briefly describe the type and format of communication products (e.g., reports, fact sheets, case studies, website, etc.) that will be developed and strategy for communicating and transferring the concepts, strategies and analytic methods to state and local officials.

7. Report Schedule: acknowledgment of quarterly report requirement (schedule established by EPA) and planned final report submission date.

8. Budget: provide a budget for the following categories:
    a) personnel
    b) fringe benefits
    c) contractual costs
    d) travel
    e) equipment
    f) supplies
    g) other
    h) total direct costs
    i) total indirect costs: must include documentation of accepted indirect rate
    j) total cost

Applicants should clearly mark information in their proposal which they consider confidential. EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency regulations at 40 CFR. Part 2, Subpart B.

VIII. EVALUATION FACTORS

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the applications. The proposals will be ranked according to the following criteria and maximum point allocation:

Criteria	Points
SIGNIFICANCE: Will the proposed project improve state and local decision making and policy and help reduce greenhouse gases and criteria pollutants through cost-effective strategies? Are products national in scope and readily transferable to states and localities?	25
FEASIBILITY/APPROACH: Are the analytical methods for each program emphasis suitable and adequately defined? Does the plan include a communications strategy for reaching the target audience?	20
INNOVATION: Does the proposal explore new approaches or address existing challenges through new methodologies, analyses or strategies?	20
QUALIFICATIONS AND RELATED EXPERIENCE: Is the project likely to succeed? Do key personnel who will work on the project have sufficient background, expertise, and training to accomplish the project? Does the applicant have experience developing similar products?	20
BUDGET: Is the proposed budget reasonable and adequate to support the proposed work in the project period?	15
Total points	100

OTHER FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED**:** EPA will carefully consider the applicant's past performance in administering Federal financial assistance and carrying out projects supported by EPA and other Federal agencies. This may include the results of audits conducted by EPA's Office of Inspector General, independent auditors, other Federal agencies, or State, local or tribal oversight entities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their performance history in their proposals and to provide contacts for EPA to obtain additional information.

IX. REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will first be screened to ensure that the proposed activities are consistent with the grant statute. Project proposals that are inconsistent with the EPA's statutory authority or the goals for the program are ineligible for funding and will not be evaluated and ranked.

EPA's Office of Atmospheric Programs may establish a panel composed of EPA staff to review and select proposals of applicants and to review and rank or list proposals using a point system. An approval official must determine, from the qualified final applications, which to approve.

X. Executive Order 12372 Compliance

Applicants selected for funding will be required to provide a copy of their proposal to their State Point of Contact for review, pursuant with Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. This review is not required of initial applications and not all states require such a review.

XI. HOW TO APPLY

Completed application packages must be received by regular or express mail on or before midnight June 17, 2003. Applications received after the deadline date will not be considered for funding. Please provide an original and one copy, plus one fully-completed and signed Application for Federal Assistance. The application package should be addressed to:

1. Mailing Address (USPS mail only):

Steve Dunn (Mail Code 6205J)
OAR Office of Atmospheric Programs
State and Local Capacity Building Branch
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

2. Express Delivery (Fed Ex, UPS, etc):

Steve Dunn
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
501 3rd St., NW, Room 4407D
Washington, DC 20001

Applications e-mailed or faxed will serve only as a placeholder and must be followed by an original signature document and 1 copy, received by the deadline date. If the original is not received by the deadline, the application will not be considered. However, email or fax copies will expedite the review process and may be sent to Steve Dunn at:
(202) 565-2093 (fax) dunn.stevev@epa.gov (email).

XI. WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

Applicants with questions about this solicitation should contact:

Steve Dunn
Telephone (202) 564-3526; Fax (202) 565-2093
e-mail dunn.stevev@epa.gov

- or -

Sue Gander
Telephone (202) 564-3527; Fax (202) 565-2093
e-mail gander.sue@epa.gov

The only pre-application assistance available under this competition will be related to clarifying the requirements of the solicitation notice.

DEADLINE FOR COMPLETED FINAL PROPOSALS
Must be received no later than midnight on
June 17, 2003